

News from Ed Markey

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“THE WORLD MUST ENFORCE THIS RESOLUTION IF WE ARE TO STOP THE SPREAD OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION,” SAYS REP. MARKEY

Washington, DC: Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), Co-Chair of the Bipartisan Congressional Task Force on Non-proliferation, today released the following statement in reaction to Secretary Powell's presentation to the United Nations on Iraq's non-compliance with UN Resolution 1441:

“The evidence that Secretary Powell presented to the Security Council was detailed and specific – from satellite photographs to communications intercepts to human intelligence and defector reports. While all of this information is circumstantial, it points to a continuation of the behavior we saw from Iraq in the 1990s: using every possible tactic to hide weapons of mass destruction, weapons programs and weapons scientists from the prying eyes of international inspectors. It shows conclusively that Iraq is in material breach of its disarmament obligations, and that Saddam Hussein is essentially thumbing his nose at the Security Council with a ‘catch me if you can’ response.

“The question now is what is the world going to do about this? No one wants a war. We would all like to see Iraq disarm peacefully. But the evidence Secretary Powell presented today raises serious doubts in my mind that Iraq has any intention of ever fully cooperating with the UN inspectors or meeting its disarmament obligations. Saddam just doesn't seem to get it. He thinks that he can continue to play the same old games he has been playing with the inspectors for the last 11 years. He invaded Kuwait, and the international community united to repel this brazen aggression. Peace was restored when Saddam Hussein promised he would disarm in accordance with the ceasefire agreement and with all relevant UN Security Council Resolutions. He has not fulfilled those promises. Twelve years of obfuscation, bluff, and bluster by Saddam Hussein have left the world community no choice but to enforce the UN resolutions without his assistance.

“The time for games has ended. The inspectors should continue their work and aggressively pursue the new leads unveiled today. At the same time, I recommend that the Administration seek, and the UN adopt, a second resolution authorizing the use of force to disarm Iraq. While the Bush Administration has indicated that it is not seeking one, adoption of such a resolution would demonstrate that any military action in Iraq has multilateral support, thereby conferring the legitimacy of international law on such action. I believe that any military response to the threat posed by Iraq should be multilateral, but it also must leave no doubt that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by *any* nation will not be tolerated.

“I think the Governments of France, China, and Russia should very carefully weigh the evidence presented today and consider what kind of precedent they want to set for any future attempts to enforce compliance with international nonproliferation treaties. If the Security Council fails to demonstrate the very serious consequences that proliferators face, then we may be entering a century in which these treaty regimes crumble and collapse, and more and more nations and sub-national terrorist organizations acquire weapons of mass destruction. The world must enforce UN Resolution 1441 if we are to stem this tide.”